



Rev. Dr. Nicholas Leonard Betts

March 22, 1966 - November 23, 2022

Reverend Dr. Nicholas L. Betts was born on March 22, 1966 in Memphis, Tennessee and was the only child of Willie Neal and Jennie Mary Betts. He departed this life early Wednesday morning, November 23, 2022.

As a child, Reverend Betts was nurtured in the Greenwood C.M.E. Church in Memphis, TN and was a product of the Memphis Public School system. While in high school, he was called by God to preach at the age of 17 and at the age of 19 he received his first pastoral appointment to the Jones Grove C.M.E. Church in Humboldt, Tennessee. He was later ordained as a traveling Deacon and Elder and admitted into full Connection in the West Tennessee Annual Conference.

Reverend Betts attended Lane College in Jackson, Tennessee and earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration with a minor in Psychology. He continued his pursuit for education at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia receiving a Master of Divinity Degree, majoring in Christian Education with a minor in Clinical Psychology. While in Graduate School, he was pastor of the Rock of Ages C.M.E. Church, Augusta, Georgia and after completing Graduate School, was assigned to pastor the Bakers Chapel C.M.E. Church in Goodlettsville, Tennessee. In May of 2000, he also received an Honorary Doctor of Divinity, Jackson Theological Seminary - Shorter College, Little Rock, Arkansas. Reverend Betts also

pastored the St. Peter's C.M.E. Church in Flint, Michigan (1992-1995) and Greater Cleaves C.M.E. Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (1995-2000).

In July 2000, Reverend Betts was assigned to pastor the Israel Metropolitan C.M.E. Church in Gary, Indiana. At Israel, Pastor Betts lead community service initiatives that fed and tutored youth and helped them to obtain their GED and ministries to support singles and senior citizens. During this time, Pastor Betts also worked with the Gary City Drug Court, which was a program that offered participants alternatives to incarceration. While working with the Gary City Drug Court, he provided spiritual counseling and mentoring to victims and perpetrators of domestic violence and substance abuse. This is where he met Valerie, who was the Gary City Court Administrator. She later became the love of his life.

Pastor Betts and Valerie were married in May of 2004. Shortly after, they were relocated to Richmond, California where he was assigned from 2005-2012 to pastor at Davis Chapel C.M.E. Church where he was an integral part of its rebuilding project. During their life together, Pastor and Mrs. Betts would continue to serve in several churches over the years: Warren Chapel C.M.E. Church, San Pedro, California (2012); Century Chapel C.M.E. Church, Sacramento, California (2012-2015) and Phillips Temple C.M.E. Church, Toledo, Ohio (2015-2018). In 2018, Pastor and Sis. Betts were relocated to serve at Miles Chapel C.M.E. Church in Texarkana, Arkansas. While in Texarkana, Pastor Betts was an active member of the Texarkana Christian Fellowship and would frequently sing with the Male chorus at Miles Chapel. He was also Patron Pastor for the Missionary Society, Arkansas Region.

Reverend Betts never met a stranger...always friendly, kind and relishing every hug, handshake, and moments of laughter; he was a loyal and faithful friend and brother to many. An avid Dallas Cowboy fan, while helping the coach call out plays when watching them, he would always excitedly yell out

“how bout them Cowboys!”

Pastor Betts remained tirelessly committed, even at great personal sacrifices, to serving God and the CME Church even through his sickness.

Pastor Betts was preceded in death by his parents Willie Neal and Jennie Mary Betts; uncles, Otis Fields, Jr. and Bob Fields; aunt, Clastella Fields-Hickman; grandparents, Otis Fields, Sr. and Willie Mae Fields; sister-in-law, Doodleatha Roby and brother-in-law John W. Williams.

He is survived by his loving and devoted wife Valerie; sister, Andrea Eason; Valerie's daughters Kimberly (Karl) Jenkins and Kelli (James III) Stanton; uncles, Everett (Martha) Fields and Joe (Alice) Fields; aunts, Lillian Fields and Roberta (Kevin) Montgomery; sisters-in-law, Leslie Williams and Ellen (Ray) Smedley; four bonus grandchildren, cousins, nieces, nephews, many friends and the C.M.E. Church family.

Cemetery Details

Elmwood Cemetery

Tinker Hill Rd
Jackson, TN

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 9. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Paul C. M.E. Church
282 Middleton St
Jackson, TN

Service

DEC 9. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Paul C. M.E. Church
282 Middleton St
Jackson, TN

Tribute Wall



“ *Stephenson-Shaw Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Rev. Dr. Nicholas Leonard Betts*



Stephenson-Shaw Funeral Home, Inc - December 07, 2022 at 10:15 AM



“ *Rev. Dr. Nicholas Leonard Betts*

January 28, 2023 at 12:37 PM



“ *To First Lady Valerie Betts, I shall always be truly grateful that I had the opportunity to serve with Rev. Betts in the Cleveland Pittsburgh District. I was honored that I was asked preach during his tenure at Phillips (Toledo, Ohio), but more than that he called me friend. He always encouraged me whenever and wherever he saw me. I shall miss him. May the love and peace of God bring you comfort and joy (upon remembrance of him) now and in the days to come. Pastor Lydia Evelyn Spragin*

Lydia Spragin - December 09, 2022 at 02:21 PM



“ *Praying for Valerie and there family.*

Valeria Johnson-Fletcher - December 08, 2022 at 07:54 PM

MA

“ *Miles Chapel Texarkana, Ark purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Rev. Dr. Nicholas Leonard Betts.*



Miles Chapel Texarkana, Ark - December 07, 2022 at 07:23 PM

DJ

“ *My good friend Rev. I met Rev. while doing dialysis in Toledo Ohio. We sat in those chairs for 3 years receiving treatment. We shared stories, laughed a lot and just conversated about any and everything. What made it even better is that we were both Cowboys fans. He was truly a nice and kind man and a true friend. You will be truly missed my man. Heaven is waiting for your arrival. Your friend Darryl Jones*

Darryl Jones - December 06, 2022 at 04:43 PM

MP

“ *Mrs. Gant Phillips lit a candle in memory of Dr. Nicholas Betts*



Mrs. Virgie Gant Phillips - December 05, 2022 at 07:28 PM

EW

“ *Rev. Betts graciously exceptional to serve as our CME Missionary Patron Minister. What a strong leader and support. Ella Watson Arkansas Region Missionary Society.*

Ella Watson - December 02, 2022 at 11:16 PM

JA

“ My deepest condolences to the loved ones of Dr. Betts. Words can't express how much this news hurts. As a child at Greater Cleaves (Oklahoma City, OK) we looked up to him not only as the leader of the church, but more like a son, brother, and most of all a father figure. We loved having Sunday dinner with him EVERY Sunday. We were saddened when he was reassigned later on. The memories we have shared with him are memories we will cherish forever. Sleep in Heavenly Peace. You will truly be missed.

Je'Netta Ausbie - November 29, 2022 at 09:11 PM

SG

“ RIP REV. BETTS! He was a great Lanite friend as well as my former pastor. Praying for your family.. Greater Cleaves OKC will always remember you as a great Pastor!!



Sharonda gray - November 29, 2022 at 08:37 PM

HJ

“ While we were in seminary, one weekend near the end of the semester I had an anxiety attack from the pressure of all the work that had to be completed. No one else was in the dorm but Rev Betts and myself. I asked him to take me to the hospital because I thought I was having a heart attack. He said I can't drive. I said Nick you are driving today. The drive almost gave me a real heart attack. By God's grace we made it to the hospital. I will miss my friend.

Harlan Jones - November 29, 2022 at 04:39 PM

DW

“ My loving memory of "Nicky" was New Years Day...After we sang Happy Birthday to their father for the very first time...He gave Andrea "THE BIGGEST AND TIGHTEST HUG" Saying I've got a Big Sis!!! Both of them Embraced and Shared Tears of Joy!

Denise Wilson - November 28, 2022 at 03:07 PM

RB

I fondly remember Rev. Ike Hentral driving us both to Lane College to enroll. We were roommates that year. That year Rev. Joe Gardner risked destroying his car by allowing Nicky to drive to Paris, TN to church and I would drive back. A lot of faith was in each moment. Rest on my friend.

Roland K. Boone - November 29, 2022 at 04:39 PM

OM

I will miss our conversations during the General Conference. We shall gather at the Great General Conference with God presiding. Orenthia Mason

Orenthia Mason - November 30, 2022 at 05:57 PM

MP

The Arkansas Region Women's Missionary Society was blessed to have Rev. Dr. Nicholaus Betts serve as the Patron Minister for four years in the Arkansas Region. He was quite a leader who lived by example. He prayed for the members and shared his experiences. We extend our deepest condolences to the family and friends of Rev. Dr. Betts and pray their comfort at this time.

Virgie Gant Phillips, President

Arkansas Region WMS

Bishop Marvin Frank Thomas, Sr. Presiding Prelate

Mrs. Virgie Gant Phillips - December 05, 2022 at 07:37 PM

AB

I met Rev. Betts when he pastored in Flint, Michigan and we joked about being relatives. He was from Memphis and I was from Jackson. My condolences to the family and congregation.

Alonzo Betts - December 07, 2022 at 10:08 AM